

SECRET

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: George P. Shultz
SUBJECT: Your Visit to Japan

*State paper prepared
for Secretary Shultz*

State Dept. review completed

I. SETTING

Your trip to Japan comes at the beginning of a new era in Japanese-American relations. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Nakasone, Japan is becoming increasingly assertive in international affairs and is forging a new role for itself. We wish to encourage this trend toward an increased sense of international responsibility by the Japanese, but it is essential that it be within the framework of a close bilateral relationship with the United States. Your visit to Japan and the themes that you strike there will be instrumental in indicating to the Japanese and American people the kind of relationship we want with Japan in the years ahead. In recent years, we have achieved a close bilateral partnership, with Japan gradually becoming more of an equal rather than a junior partner. As we look to the future, we want to move beyond a simple bilateral relationship toward global cooperation.

Despite our concerns over trade and defense issues, our overall relationship with Japan is basically healthy. Ambassador Mansfield has said many times that ours is "the most important bilateral relationship in the world -- bar none." Your visit will be of immense interest and one of the most important events of the year to the Japanese people and government and will help strengthen Nakasone's image and standing in his country.

Global cooperation with Japan to achieve peace and prosperity in the world, based on our shared values and close political, economic, and security ties, should be the overarching theme of your visit. So you can emphasize our overall relationship with Japan and these broader issues, we have strived to resolve many outstanding trade and defense problems as we could before your visit.

3. Defense and Security Issues.

Japan is moving slowly but surely toward acceptance of a greater defense role. Our mutual security relationship is proceeding smoothly, and we recently concluded an agreement on exchanging defense technology. It is in the area of Japan's direct defense efforts where you will want to seek a commitment from Nakasone to strengthen Japan's ability to carry out within this decade the defense roles and missions that it has accepted for itself.

Given political sensitivities on this matter in Japan, I believe that we should play defense in a low-key publicly during the visit and reserve discussion of defense issues principally for your private meetings with Nakasone.